adjusting differences destroyed the effectiveness of the plan. After careful reconsideration of facts and documents it is not too much to say that had the two Allied Armies been as completely under the control of one *Generalissimo* as they became after the Beauvais decision in April, 1918, the Nivelle strategy, while it might not and probably would not have achieved a decision, would have secured a notable success. As it was, the Armies were never given a decent chance. The stubborn mind of Haig was transfixed on the Somme. When a change of terrain was suggested it took him a long time to extricate his mental top boots from the Somme mud. He always moved slowly and heavily when rapid and agile movement was essential. Weeks were wasted in unpleasant and nagging discussions as to the extension of the line to be held by British troops which was essential to the constitution of that mass of manoeuvre which was the main feature of the new plan. Then came long delays over questions of transport and co-ordination. A conference of Ministers and Generals had to be summoned to adjust the dif-

Calais ferences which had arisen on these points.

arm^port * ™ h«ld at Calais on the 26th February.

Twelve days before that date, according to the original plan, the attack was due to commence. The German attack on Verdun had started a week earlier than it was due. That is why it was such a

success in its initial stage. Joffre could not believe that armies were capable of moving at so early a date. At the Calais Conference M. Briand and General Lyautey represented the French Government, and I myself attended on behalf of the British War Cabinet. General Nivelle was there to put his point of view, and Sir Douglas Haig came to present his case. Sir